

Q. 1241

Records of the Meeting of the
Inquiry Committee of the Privy Council on Dec. 8, 1941

Inquiry Committee Meeting
Concerning Declaration of
War against America and
England.

Dec. 8, 1941 (Monday) 7:30 a.m. all the councillors of the Privy Council (except Councillor KANEKO) meet in the East Third Waiting Hall in the Imperial Palace. Naval Minister SFIMADA reports on the starting aspect of the war opened against America and England. While he is reporting the Council receives the Emperor's reference bill for their deliberation pertaining to the above subject. President FARA announces the general committee meeting and the meeting opens at once.

Members present:

President FARA

Chairman of Inquiry Committee: Vice President SUZUKI

Inquiry Committee members:

Councillor ARIMA	Councillor ISFII
" ISFIZUKA	" KUBOTA
" MINAMI	" SFIMIZU
" ARAKI	" NARA
" SUGAFARA	" MATSUI
" USFIO	" MATSUURA
" FUKAI	" HAYASFI
" MANO	" FUTAGAMI
" OBATA	" OSHIMA
" MITSUCFI	" TAKEGOSFI
" IKEDA	" IZAWA

A member absent: Councillor KANEKO

Government members;

Premier)	
Home Minister)	TOJO
Army Minister)	
Education Minister FASFIDA		
Agriculture and Forestry Minister)	INO
Overseas Minister)	
Welfare Minister KOIZUMI		
Justice Minister IWAMURA		
Navy Minister SFIMADA		
Foreign Minister TOGO		
Communication Minister TERASFIMA		
Finance Minister KAYA		
Commerce and Industry KISFI		
Railway Minister HATTA		

Explaining members:

Chief Secretary of the Cabinet FOSFINO
Chief of the Legislative Bureau MORIYAMA
Chairman of the Cabinet Planning Board SUZUKI
Chief of the Intelligence Bureau TANI
Chief of the East Asia Bureau, Foreign Ministry YAMAMOTO
Chief of the Europe and Asia Foreign Ministry SAKAMOTO
Chief of the Treaty Bureau, Foreign Ministry MATSUMOTO
Chief of the Army Affairs Bureau, Army Ministry NUTO
Chief of the Naval Affairs Bureau, Navy Ministry OKA
Chief Secretary HORIE
Secretary MOROHASPI
Secretary TAKAESUJI

(Meeting opened at 7:45 a.m.)

Chairman SUZUKI declared that the meeting come to order.

Premier TOJO explains the reason why, at last, they have been obliged to deal with this bill.

Comm. member ISFII asks in regard to the time of declaration of war.

TOJO answers that it shall be done as soon as the Imperial sanction is obtained on this subject.

KUBOTA questions regarding the relationship between negotiations with America and treatment of this subject. To this Premier TOJO answers that at their meeting in the Emperor's presence on Dec. 1st, war against America, England and Holland was decided on. Therefore those negotiations were continued only for the sake of strategy.

SPIMIZU asks whether or not war is to be declared against Holland; also he asks what will be the attitude of Siam. TOJO replies that Japan will not declare war against Holland in view of future strategic convenience. As for Siam the Japanese Government is in the course of negotiations with her for concluding an Alliance Pact.

MINAMI asks what attitude Germany will assume in relation to the Tripartite Alliance, following the disposition of this subject. To this TOJO and SAKAMOTO, Chief of the Europe and Asia Bureau, reply that, as far as the German Government is concerned, as soon as Japan declares war against America and England, Germany and Italy will also assume the same attitude as Japan, and they will not make a separate peace. In fact they are preparing the draft of an agreement therefor.

NARA asks what will be the attitude of Soviet Russia. TOJO replies that relationship between Japan and Soviet Russia

at present stands on the basis of the Neutrality Pact, but as to the treatment of the same he expects special care to be taken. As to the general situation, Soviet Russia is now fighting against Germany, so she will not avail herself of the Japanese southward advance. Also she will not make any ready move following America's plotting which is naturally expected. Further, if Soviet Russia grants America use of her territory in the East, that means Russia makes Japan her enemy; therefore she cannot easily make such a decision. In the future Japan shall never fail to keep an increasingly close watch over Russian activities.

SUGAHARA asks about the budget distribution of expenses incurred in connection with this proposition. Finance Minister KAWA explains that it will be drawn upon a special account of Emergency War Expense just as in the case of the China Incident.

Comm. member FUKAI debated on the fact that, under the present currency system disposition of required funds will be easily made for the time being, but in regard to materials required thoughtful planning is necessary; so he inquires the Government's opinion regarding it. TOJO replies that, in conclusion based on views from all angles it is not necessary to have much anxiety so far as material supplies are concerned and as for financing and money circulation they shall be treated with most careful attention to their bearing on materials.

Comm. member FUTAGAMI says that according to the draft for an Imperial edict which is accompanying this project for reference, it seems as though action of war is started from our side and so, he asks, if it does not give America an excuse for her declaring war. To this Premier TOJO answers that action of war may have been started from our side, the cause of the war is really nothing but the fact that America gave various economic pressures to Japan. FUTAGAMI further asks if accuracy is lacking in using the words, "America" and "England" in the draft for the Imperial edict. Foreign Minister TOGO and Chief of the Treaty Bureau MATSUMOTO answer that there are precedents that they used such words as, "China," "Russia," and "Germany" in edicts of declaration of war. In the announcement documents to enemy countries the government will use regular names of the countries involved, and there is no fear of arising misunderstanding.

Comm. member TAKEGOSHI expresses hope that there will be no lack of attention regarding food plans. Comm. member IZAWA expresses hope that they will do their best to try to bring about an effective unification of the national mind.

Comm. member IKEDA and Comm. member KUBOTA say that it will not be good to leave any doubtful point in the Imperial edict and so it will be better to avoid using the word, "America." To this Foreign Minister TOGO replies that it is known all over the world and it is clear that America means the United States of North America.

Chairman SUZUKI considers that questioning has been finished by the above discussion and he asks the Government Ministers and Explaining Members to leave.

(Ministers and Explaining Members leave.)

Then as the result of conference among the committee members it was unanimously decided to approve this proposition as it is.

Thereupon Chairman SUZUKI declared the adjournment of the meeting.

(Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.)

General Outline of the Privy Council
Attending to Business at the Time of
Declaration of War against America
and England

The international situation surrounding the China Incident had become tense and diplomatic negotiations with England and America had been driven close to the breaking point. The Cabinet anticipated that it might happen that war would be declared at the same time with the opening of hostilities. Concerning procedures to be taken at such a time MORIYAMA, Chief of Legislative Bureau privately had conferred with FORIE, Chief Secretary of Privy Council. On Dec. 7 (Sunday) at 4 p.m. MORIYAMA phoned to FORIE saying that he wanted to have a talk with FORIE concerning an urgent treatment of affairs to face the tense situation at hand, and asked him to come and have a meeting in the official residence of Premier at 7:30 p.m. FORIE at once notified Secretary MOROFASPI by phone and MOROFASPI notified Secretary TAKATSUJI accordingly. Further, Procurator HOTA and Commissioner NODA were notified of the meeting by a messenger. So at 7:30 p.m. everyone came to meet in the Premier's official residence. At 8 p.m. in the office room of Chief of the Legislative Bureau they were informed of details of the matter by MORIYAMA, Chief of the Legislative Bureau. Owing to the disruption of Japan-America conference a critical situation was brought about and Japanese Army and Navy were to begin action early in the morning, next day, and the government would present, during the next day, declaration of war against America and England for Imperial sanction. Therefore they had Procurator HOTA, etc. go on to prepare a bill pertaining to this matter and at the same time Chief Secretary FORIE informed FARA, President of Privy Council, and SUZUKI, Vice-President of Privy Council, by phone of the above fact, receiving instructions from them, he made arrangements for holding a meeting of the Privy Council, and then they went home at 11 p.m. After that the two Secretaries MOROFASPI and TAKATSUJI moved to the official residence of the Cabinet Chief Secretary and in a room there they set on preparing an inquiry and report draft on the matter of declaration of war

against America and England. They finished writing after and had a nap.

It was a fairly cold day and was not clear either.

A little after 4 a.m. Dec. 8 (Monday) Cabinet Secretary INADA informed the two secretaries of the fact that it had been decided to ask for Imperial sanction for declaration of war against America and England. The two Secretaries at once passed this information on to the Chief Secretary. Further they sent telephone message to the President, Vice-President and each Councillor asking them to come and meet in the East Third Hall of the Imperial Palace to consider an urgent matter at 7:30 a.m. By the appointed time all the members of Privy Council (except Councillor KANEKO) and the Chief Secretary and others of Privy Council got together there, when Navy Minister SPIMADA reported on the outbreak of war against America and England at Hawaii and Malay. While he was reporting they received a draft of the Imperial ratification pertaining to the declaration of war against America and England. President HARA announced the General Committee Meeting. At once the meeting opened. Since the bill was an extremely urgent one it was discussed in a hurry, the Committee Meeting adjourning at 9:55 a.m. Following this at 10:50 with the Emperor's presence a plenary meeting was held and it was unanimously approved. At once the resolution was presented to the Emperor. The time was exactly 11 a.m. The sun was shining brilliantly and the weather was very clear.

against America and England. They finished writing after 12 p.m. and had a nap.

It was a fairly cold day and was not clear either.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

W. D. C. No. _____
I. P. S. No. 1078

Statement of Source and Authenticity

I, M. Takatsuji hereby certify that I am officially connected with the Japanese Government in the following capacity: Secretary of Privy Council and that as such official I have custody of the document hereto attached consisting of 14 pages, dated 8 Dec, 1941, and described as follows: Records of the meeting of the Investigation Committee, Privy Council, concerning Declaration of War against America and England. Dated 8 December 1941.

I further certify that the attached record and document is an official document of the Japanese Government, and that it is part of the official archives and files of the following named ministry or department (specifying also the file number or citation, if any, or any other official designation of the regular location of the document in the archives or files): Privy Council, Imperial Palace ground.

Signed at Tokyo on this
17th day of Sept., 1946.

/s/ M. Takatsuji

Signature of Official

Witness: s/ T. Swzuki

SEAL

Official Capacity

Statement of Official Procurement

I Edward P. Monaghan, hereby certify that I am associated with the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, and that the above certification was obtained by me from the above signed official of the Japanese Government in the conduct of my official business. Signed at Tokyo on this
17th day of Sept., 1946

Witness: /s/ Eric W. Fleisher 2d Lt.

/s/ Edward P. Monaghan
NAME

Investigator, IPS
Official Capacity